THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. National Highways Authority of India is taking up the four laning of NH-4, from Neelamanpla to Tumkur on B.O.T. (Build, Operate & Transfer) basis.

(b) and (c) The project is still at pre-land acquisition stage. Therefore, the estimated cost and time by when the project will start, can not be indicated.

**Improvement of National Highway No. 53**

1833. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a sum of Rs. 134 crores have been sanctioned for the construction/improvement of the National Highway No. 53;

(b) the amount released so far for the purpose;

(c) the progress made in this regard;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the contractor has stopped work due to want of funds;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) if not, by when work will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Estimated cost of widening of NH. 53 is Rs. 186 crore (Rs. 137 crore for the stretch in Manipur and Rs. 49 crore for Assam portion) against which works amounting to Rs. 68.14 crore have been sanctioned so far.

(b) and (c) Expenditure of Rs. 14.12 crore has been incurred up to March 98 and works amounting Rs. 19.25 crore have been planned during 1998-99.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) The various works are planned to be completed by 2010.

**Delay in Settlement of Motor Accident Claims**

1834. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government aware that the average time taken for settlement of third party claims in the event of death under Motor accident Claims Tribunal (MACT) is around seven years whereas in the event of death or disability of the bread-winner the survival of the entire family is at stake;

(b) if so, the number of claims registered, cleared and pending at the end of 1995, 1996 and 1997; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to clear the claims speedily?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The claims for compensation to road accident victims are processed by the Motor Accident Claims Tribunals in accordance with the provisions of Section 168 and 169 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the relevant rules of different State Governments. The claims are paid only after assertaining the relevant facts particularly the genuineness ot the claimants. The possibilities of delay in settlement of these claims can not be ruled out. As the claims are filed in various courts and also there are appeals against awards of lower courts no authentic data about the pendency of such cases is available.

With a view to expedite settlement of claims, Government from time to time requests the State Government to make apporpriate arrangements for settlement of such claims.